



# STUDENT LIFE IN THE WEST

.BY

A. J. APPASAMY, M.A., (Harvard)  
D.PHIL. (Oxon.)

E03655

CHRISTIAN LITERATURE SOCIETY FOR INDIA

MADRAS ALLAHABAD RANGOON COLOMBO

1929



## PREFACE

This little book has been prepared for the use of those who would like to know something of University life in America and Europe. The subject is a large one. All I can hope to do in the following pages is to give a brief account of student life in the West drawing very largely from my own experience.

It ought to be made clear at this stage that Oxford is by no means typical of the British Universities as a whole. At Cambridge the system is much less tutorial than at Oxford. A great number of students in the other universities of Britain go through a system which is not at all tutorial. Some of the modern universities in England have no more residential characteristics than those in India.

I am deeply indebted to Mr. J. S. Hoyland, Mr. B. Clutterbuck and Rev. J. J. De Boer for the care with which they have read the manuscript of this book and for the many valuable suggestions which they have made.

A. J. APPASAMY

## CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INDIAN STUDENTS IN THE WEST ...	1
II. IDEALS OF EDUCATION ...	9
III. METHODS OF STUDY ...	17
IV. TEACHERS AND THEIR METHODS ...	27
V. TEACHERS AND STUDENTS ...	39
VI. ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE ...	47
VII. SOCIAL LIFE ...	56
VIII. RELIGION AND STUDENT LIFE ...	64
IX. EARNING ONE'S WAY THROUGH COLLEGE ...	72

# **Student Life in the West**

## **CHAPTER I**

### **Indian Students in the West**

SOME years ago there landed in America a young man and his wife in an almost forlorn condition. Tall and impressive in appearance, the man attracted more attention by the unusual Indian garb he wore. He must have been about thirty-five years old. For some years he had been editing a paper in Bombay ; but he had wanted very much to visit America and to fit himself for a career of enlarged usefulness. He sold the paper and with the money purchased his own and his wife's passage. When they set foot on American soil, all they had was twenty-five dollars—and brains. The young man entered a theological seminary and worked his way through with characteristic pluck, while his wife studied medicine. After a few years of training they returned to India to be towers of strength in their community.

The impulse which led young Karmarkar across the seas has led many another young man also. He may have neglected his opportunities for education in early youth ; he may have found the curriculum of the Indian universities too hard and strenuous. After struggling along for some years, he crosses

the seas to find out whether he cannot begin all over again. While some have been led by this impulse, a great many have looked upon their study in the West as necessary to give a finishing touch to their education. They have plodded patiently through the exacting courses of the Indian colleges and now they want the stamp of Western culture to be impressed on their work. To not a few, the innumerable associations connected with Europe and America constitute a strong appeal. They would like to see the lands where Tennyson and Gladstone and Emerson wrote and worked, the art-galleries in which are stored beautiful paintings and statues, the cathedrals replete with historic and architectural interest, the aspects of Nature which inspire the poets of the Western world to sing those strains—sweet, tender, exquisite—which they have come to love so well. But more than all these impulses is the strange but irresistible fascination which in all young Indian minds is attached to the West. It is the 'lure of the West.' It cannot be adequately explained or analyzed, but is probably closely akin to the desire to see new customs, new peoples, and to pass through new and strange experiences.

There is much difference between the students who go to England and those who go to America. The cost of education in England being so much higher than in America, with no opportunities for self-support, the students who go over to England

have generally more money and more brains. They go abroad on the basis of their relatives' financial support or of a liberal scholarship. In view of the positions with influence and lucrative salaries open to them on their return to India, large sums of money expended on their education are regarded as investments well worth while. Keen students they are, with a promise of real usefulness in the future. After a sojourn of a few years, well spent in England, they return home, keener and brighter, their minds full of thrilling experiences. The students who land in America have a larger share of grit and determination than of money. In their efforts to support themselves, they mingle with men of all sorts and conditions and come to know the many-sidedness of human character. Much of their time is devoted to adding accounts, selling books, waiting at tables and cleaning rooms. The abundance of colleges and institutions in America places them in a difficult position. Their plans are not carefully laid beforehand, but as they go along, they use their own initiative and mark out their courses of study in different institutions.

The foreign student's impressions about the conditions which he sees constantly change. The longer he lives in the West, the darker his picture of its life becomes. Dr. Sathianadhan of Madras wrote some years ago about his experiences in England and in America. The reviewer noticed that while his



picture of England was sombre, fuller of shadows than of light, his picture of America was bright and cheerful, and he accounted for this by saying that while the writer had spent four years in England he had spent but a few months in America. There is a great deal of truth in that. Every month, even every week, surprises are coming in to destroy one's first roseate view of things.

Several difficulties face the Indian student who goes to the West. The hardships of climate with its mysterious changes tell upon his life all through his stay abroad. On the Indian Ocean there may not be much trouble unless it happens to be the monsoon season; but the change from the hot and stifling voyage through the Red Sea to the sudden cold of the Mediterranean, unless guarded against, may play havoc with his constitution.

Most students reach the West so as to be there in time for the beginning of the college year, which means the beginning of the cold months. Within a few weeks after landing the rigours of a Western winter begin to press upon them. In America the thermometer goes down below zero and, while it may be quite comfortable to live inside the house because of the heating system, the sharp air outside is beyond the endurance of one who has been accustomed to the tropical heat. Like a burglar who breaks into your house and steals your goods, the winter often leaves you exhausted and tired.

Spring fever—the name given to that peculiar vacancy of mind and spirit which comes as a reaction from the severe cold of winter—is a common trouble. It is wonderful to watch the people abandoning themselves to the enjoyment and mirth of spring. Men and women who have been confined *indoors during* the winter months now set out with jubilant air and merry heart to enjoy life in the open; birds warble; the lawns put on their mantle of lovely green; the trees send forth their vernal shoots. The advent of spring means one continuous abandonment to the beauty and charm of Nature. After the summer comes along, the student gaily sets forth for his holiday but if he is not careful, he may suddenly find himself in some far-off place, away from all his warm clothing, passing through some days or weeks of unusual cold.

These many changes and vagaries of climate are, especially in the first few months, great sources of trouble. Our minds are closely allied to our bodies and these 'trifles'—they may seem trifles—do a great deal to make or to mar the strength of mind and spirit. When however the student has learnt to adjust himself to the vicissitudes of climate, he will find that his capacity for work is very much greater in the West than in India. The severe cold acts as a tonic upon his system and he is braced for continual and intensive work.

Another difficulty which faces the Indian student

who goes abroad is the fact that he finds himself suddenly flung into a new environment so different from that to which he has been used all along. A multitude of strange faces meet him wherever he turns. He has the sense of being lost amidst the bewildering customs of a new land. At table, among friends, in a new home, he is anxious not to offend the feelings of others by a breach of etiquette but may find himself hurting them in ignorance. It is always a strange experience to be thrown for the first time into the vortex of a vast city like New York or London. The young Indian student who may have come from some small town is called upon to thread his way through the unfamiliar sights and sounds of a great city, the roar of whose traffic, the vastness of whose buildings and the complexity of whose life are apt to fill him with confusion. These difficulties disappear with time. As the months pass by the strange sights become familiar. But during the first few weeks of his arrival they exercise over his mind a peculiar influence and give him the idea that he has not so much come to a new country as that he has been transported by magic into a wonderland of fantastic and unreal dreams.

If with time this strange sense of unfamiliarity wears off, with time another difficulty of the Indian student who is abroad makes itself keenly felt. It is the fact that he is a stranger in a strange land. The outer aspect of strangeness may disappear. He may

find himself at home in the complex life of a new civilization. He may even acquire a good number of friends whose kindly face and warm greeting he always loves. But he cannot forget that the land in which he lives is but a land of temporary sojourn. If there are a few friends who welcome him to their hearth with cordial love, there are multitudes who are either indifferent to him or who even sullenly resent his presence in their country. A few years' stay may be tolerated, but anything like settling down in the country would provoke the keenest resentment. This feeling that one stays in the country for a brief while, one's presence being more or less tolerated, adds power and zest to the natural longing for home which awakens in any man who leaves his native country. Particularly does this longing for home become sharp and acute as the holidays come round. When college is in session and the day is filled with a round of duties and interests, the hours may speed along swiftly, but when holidays commence, the rooms become deserted, and the other students return to their homes, then the sharp feeling of absence from the intimate circle of one's family invades and depresses the mind.

Another effect upon the Indian student is that he begins to love his country in a new way. Distance lends enchantment to the view, and India, across regions of fathomless water, becomes the centre of new thoughts and ideals. The unfavour-

able features of Indian life are forgotten and a process of idealization takes place. He is asked about India, its customs, its music, its literature. A professor went over to America from India and delivered a course of lectures. One of the men who heard him—he was an able scholar and writer himself, teaching philosophy in a college—remarked in a disappointed way that he had expected to hear something peculiarly Indian and had heard only what any other Western teacher of philosophy would have said. The demand is for the development of all that is unique and significant in India's life and thought.

As an incidental consequence, the student is also filled with impatience at the superficiality of so much of the imitation that goes on in India. A man may be dressed in European costume, but he does not think of copying the prompt, business-like habits of his Western brother. A family may sit around a table, but the spotless linen, the polished silver, the clean kitchen of the West do not go along with it. A young fellow may sing a love song, but where is the romance and chivalrous affection inspiring many a Westerner? The student from India returns to his home land, firmly convinced that in all possible matters he should continue to maintain the traditions set up in India and that, where changes are needed, the spirit as well as the form of Western civilization should be taken into India's life.

## CHAPTER II

### Ideals of Education

Like a lake which reflects on its glassy surface different objects—trees on its banks, the gorgeous sun moving across the skies—the education of any country reflects in itself with varying degrees of accuracy the ideals of that country. Education catches those gleams of light which sometimes fitfully and sometimes steadily appear on the intellectual horizon of a people. America is a land of democracy; and education in that country in many of its details reflects the democratic ideal. Education is for the many, not merely for the few. To enter the elysian fields of knowledge it is not necessary that a man should be born in a high caste or that he should be possessed of wealth. All he needs is the ambition to learn, and steady, dogged, persistent work to carry out this ambition. The golden gates of a University are not barred against any impoverished but aspiring youth. Provided he is eager to enter the University and to do hard work, these massive doors open and he enters the region of exalted intellectual effort.

The cost of education is comparatively low in America. Fees are generally levied; board and

lodging can be had only after payment ; and books cost money ! And yet in every University and college abundant provision is made, so that even the poorest student need not turn sorrowfully home—because of lack of means. Large endowments have been given by munificent donors to different schools and colleges ; and these make it possible to reduce the cost of education. With these gifts enormous buildings are erected, large libraries are formed, and the services of gifted scholars are acquired. All these are brought within easy reach of the student for a more or less nominal payment. Scholarship aid is common in educational institutions ; and financial help for those who propose to follow advanced courses of study in post-graduate schools is more abundant than perhaps anywhere else in the world.

There may be thousands of students who may find it impossible even to pay these fees and who may not have enough intellectual capacity to win scholarships. They are encouraged 'to earn their way through college,' that is, to do some work outside their college hours or during their holidays and thus to earn the money needed to pay their college bills. This characteristic of American education is so important that I shall describe it at length in a later chapter entitled 'Earning One's Way Through College.'

The widespread character of American education has its unfortunate drawbacks. The average college

graduate of America cannot perhaps hold his own against the average college graduate of other countries. It seems so normal for a good many to pass through college. The fact that so many millions complete their education without all that preliminary elimination which takes place in other countries, because of lack of means or of capacity, itself implies that among the large numbers who emerge successfully from colleges in America there are many who are not of a high grade.

The power which every little college has to confer degrees only accentuates this drawback. It is not only large and well-established Universities like Harvard, Yale, Columbia, Princeton, Chicago and California which can give degrees, but also small colleges with only two or three hundred students on their rolls. A small college may have an important function to fulfil. In it *esprit de corps* is more easily and finely developed and there is a healthy social life among the students. Every student knows every other student and the members of the staff know every student. Life in the halls or hostels and in all the athletic, literary and social clubs is wholesome. There is plenty of good fellowship, young men and women sharing in many activities and becoming intimately acquainted. Often situated in remote country places, amidst the beauty of river and hill and forest, the small colleges bring the students within the reach of the subtle and soft hands of Nature. Scattered as they are over the



country they also enable the students to live near their homes instead of congregating in large centres far from their parents. While it is quite true that the small colleges of America have all these advantages, the fact that they have their own independent existence, their own standards of study, their own examinations and their own degrees makes the level of education in America exceedingly uneven. The faculty in a small college is not up to the standard of a large university and there is a tendency to be easy-going and let everybody pass. Some small colleges may be of exceptionally high standing ; but this does not disprove the fact that the average small college, however much its students may adore it, is not a centre of the finest learning.

The lack of a uniform standard of college education is to some extent remedied by exceptional opportunities for graduate study. While the average college graduate may not have received a thorough education, he finds it possible, and for some professions, he finds it necessary, to spend some more years in advanced study. This kind of extremely specialized study gives some of that depth which is lacking in college education.

It is also in line with the democratic character of American education that a great variety of subjects are studied. Education is for life. It must enable men to face current problems of all sorts. The University man must know something of everything,

for life is many sided, and he finds, as he plunges into work, that he is in contact with a vast number of complicated issues. To meet these issues effectively, he must prepare himself even when he is a student. He must know, if it is in the barest outline, the many sciences which deal with the numerous phases of human existence. He must read something at least of the great teachers—Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Darwin—so that if later he should meet references to them he may be able to recognize them. He should know what are the authoritative books on any great subject, so that if his interest is awakened in it he may pursue a more serious study of it than is possible in the best regulated college. This breadth, this readiness to feel the innumerable currents and cross currents of life must be considered, whatever its weaknesses may be, to be one of the vital facts about education in America.

In some ways education in Oxford is of an entirely different character. There education is for the few, not for the many. While in America poor students are given innumerable facilities, in Oxford the University is conducted largely with a view to the profit of men of money and leisure. College and University bills accumulate, until by the time a man 'goes down' he finds that he has spent a considerable sum of money. Not merely in the University but in the town also, the students of the University, known

as the 'gentlemen of the 'Varsity' are expected to keep up a higher standard of living than others. In America in the theatres students would go to the cheapest seats. In Oxford the men of the University would be admitted only to the higher-priced seats. Board and lodging cost University men more than they cost others. The tradespeople charge University men more than they do others. Not only do they charge more but, alas, urge the men to buy on credit. Some men far exceed the allowances given them and go down from the University with large debts.

In America it may be possible to go through a small college on something like \$700<sup>1</sup> a year and through a first class University like Harvard on \$1000<sup>2</sup> a year. In some cases it may be possible to meet the greater part of this expense by means of scholarships and outside work. In Oxford the average Indian student spends about £300<sup>3</sup> or 400<sup>4</sup> a year. There may be men in England as well as in America who spend far more than these amounts, just as there may be others who economize and strain through on smaller amounts. The figures I have mentioned indicate a good average.

Oxford stands for culture. The routine of Oxford life is not designed with a view to cram the largest amount of information into a student's mind

	Rs	Rs	Rs	Rs
1	1925	2	2750	3 4000
				4 5333

in a given time. It is rather planned to cultivate and ennoble the mind by a study of the great classics and by a life of abundant social interests. Men at the University live a life of spacious leisure—so far as studies are concerned. There may be reading men who pore over their books. But the average University man in Oxford has his time filled with friendships, games, discussions and pleasant books. The more serious work of the University is, curiously enough, done not in the University itself but outside it. While attending lectures and writing essays during term the student often takes home his solid reading and gets through it during the vacations.

A day in Oxford, for instance, runs something like this. It begins with compulsory attendance at chapel at 7-30 a.m. After chapel comes breakfast. The rest of the morning is devoted to lectures and reading. A light lunch is followed by a strenuous afternoon of games ending up with a hearty tea, eaten with the zest which only those who have spent the whole afternoon in vigorous sports know. After tea at 4-30 p.m. and before dinner at 7-30 p.m. come some lectures and the dreaded ordeal of meeting the tutor with an essay. Dinner is in college hall where the greater part of the college assembles every night. Then the students withdraw to the common room for a brief spell of social life. The readings and discussions and debates which form so important an element in Oxford life come

after 8-30. They are generally over by 10-30 though interesting debates or pleasant social functions are prolonged to the midnight hour. During vacation time the student is expected to devote his mornings to hard study.

It will be seen from this programme that lectures and reading form but a small part of the life in the University. The other interests are so important that they give light and colour to the whole time. Education in Oxford is no dull, drab and grey affair. It is shot through with joy. However crowded a term may be with incessant interests and almost feverish activity—rarely the activity of study—it is with deep regret that one sees the term come to a close.

This programme of Oxford life may look cold on paper. Some may think that in other Universities also students spend their time in more or less the same way. The Oxford spirit which reigns over the whole place and which instils into each passing moment a unique joy is intangible like all other spirits. One feels it; one is swayed by it; one allows oneself to be swept within its wonderful compass. And yet one is unable to give it a concrete form in writing.

## CHAPTER III

### **Methods of Study**

One of the things which impressed me in the West was the full use which students make of dictionaries and note books. In India the tendency is to store up in memory all the facts relevant to the subject of study. The student aims to have at his finger's end a great deal of information bearing on his subject. But in the West the student realizes that knowledge is of different kinds. Some knowledge is so vital that it must be carried in the head. Some knowledge is so complicated and vast that the best place for it is the encyclopædias and dictionaries. By making good use of encyclopædias and dictionaries it is always possible to get at a mass of accurate and reliable information which it is neither possible nor wise to try and pack into one's mind. Some knowledge accumulated for one's own use is best contained in note books. In studying any subject it is necessary to form the habit of keeping full notes, so that whenever there is a need the points which have been gathered slowly and patiently through months of investigation may by a rapid survey of the note books be immediately recalled to the mind. Some knowledge is only fit

for the waste-paper basket. By thus classifying the different kinds of knowledge a student in the West saves himself a great deal of the intellectual strain and worry of trying to master the intricate details of a subject and comes to place great trust in his note books.

At Harvard University a peculiar theft occurred in the library. A student had been reading extensively and making careful notes, leaving these notes in the desk in the library which had been assigned to him. These notes were immensely valuable to him as they meant months of study. Someone attempted to play a dirty trick on him by carrying away the notes and by leaving in the desk a letter telling that they would be returned if a certain amount of money was placed on a spot in the library which was exactly described. The money was put on the spot as suggested but so also was a sentinel. When the culprit came to appropriate the money he was caught in the act and the notes were recovered.

This great dependence upon dictionaries and note books has its drawbacks. A scholar in the West is so intimately bound up with his library that if he is taken out of it he is often helpless. In his library he knows what books bear on his subjects, how these books are written and where he can lay his finger on information regarding any point on which he is keen. He is familiar with the books

in his library in different ways, having marked and thumbed and pored over some and having merely a bowing acquaintance with others. In this environment he works at his best. But take him away from his library and he is like a fish out of water. So little is the memory cultivated in the West that even for the simplest addition or multiplication of figures, paper and pencil are needed. Unlike western scholars, a great many Indian scholars have no libraries; they own but few books. But they have read widely and their minds are packed with a vast amount of knowledge which they are able to produce without any effort.

There is, however, a definite advantage about a Western student's way of learning a subject. He attempts to grasp as thoroughly as he can its important and salient principles. The mass of details connected with these important facts he neglects. By so centring his attention upon fundamentals he relieves his mind of the extraordinary effort required to master details. Thus free from the load of innumerable little facts he is in a position to take a genuine interest in the real issues. The lectures which he hears awaken his mind; he is stimulated by them to consider the whole subject. The Indian student's main concern seems to be to record as accurately as possible the conclusions of the lecturer and then to reproduce them exactly whenever they are wanted. The Western student's main concern



is rather to try and feel his way through the subject with the help of what he has heard. After the lectures are over he discusses them with his fellow students, trying to estimate the weakness as well as the strength of the ideas to which he has listened. Lectures to him are not merely so many effective helps to pass an examination. They are the means of quickening and stirring his mind.

This leads me to speak of the place which examinations hold in college life in the West. In America there is no final examination in which all the work which a student has done for two or three or four years before the examination is tested. The work of every term is complete by itself. The student is marked every term on the basis of the work which he has done during the term and when the time for the degree comes his record during all the terms is taken into account. For instance, if a student reads some period of Greek History during a particular term his knowledge of the period is tested at the end of the term. There is no further testing of his knowledge later in the course. As will be conceded this plan does not put the student under the necessity of carrying in his memory for the full length of the course the knowledge which has been acquired in that term along with all the knowledge acquired in the other terms. From the point of view of cultivating the memory the system works out most inefficiently; for a student makes no

effort whatsoever to remember after a term's work the knowledge which has been acquired during the term. But then a college is not a place primarily for the cultivation of memory. It is a place to help the culture of the mind. This is evident also in the way in which the work is tested. In some subjects like the study of languages there are regular recitations, i.e., exercises in class two or three times a week, and the students are drilled in the work most carefully. They are asked to read aloud and to translate. They are questioned on points of grammar. The quality of a student's work during these recitations helps to determine his marks for the term.

In some courses weekly essays on different aspects of the subject studied are required. An examination does not bring every course to a close. Some courses do end up with an examination. But some courses end up with a lengthy essay which takes the place of an examination. As the professor is half-way through his course he asks the students to begin the work on this essay. He suggests a subject or gives a choice of subjects. He also mentions the books which should be read or consulted. The paper may have to be about 3,000 or 5,000 words in length. As the students come to the lectures they keep on working at this paper and when the end of the course is reached, they hand it in to the professor. This plan is effective in

provoking a keen interest in some particular aspect of the subject on which the lectures are being given. Naturally a great deal of work is needed in order to write a paper of this length. A number of books have to be read. Information from various sources has to be gathered and the conclusions which have been reached have to be presented in an orderly way. While perhaps the student does not gain the same wide outlook by writing a paper on some aspect of his subject as he would have by reading up the whole subject for an examination, he delves deeper into some particular part of his subject. He knows this particular part with a great deal of thoroughness, and as he seeks to express his own ideas not in the hurry of the examination room but in the quiet of his own study, weighing his words and considering his arguments, he obtains a grasp of at least this particular region of a large subject in an effective manner. He learns the art of presenting consecutively and attractively a prolonged line of argument.

When I say that in America, the final examination holds no importance, I ought to refer to exceptions to this rule. In universities like Harvard and Columbia the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, for example, is given only after a stiff examination, which is as important as the thesis which the candidate has to write. The main requirement for the degree consists in the writing of this extensive thesis which may be anywhere from two hundred to four hundred pages

in length. But earlier in the course the candidate has to appear for a general examination in several subjects closely allied to his thesis. For this examination a considerable amount of hard study is required.

The system in Oxford is quite different. There is a final examination before the ordinary Arts degrees and in this examination students are examined in all the subjects which they have been studying during the course of four years. This final examination begins to loom large in the student's horizon about the third year. The first and second years are spent almost in happy oblivion of the final examination, though the Moderations, or other preliminary examinations involved in Honours courses at Oxford, need in their way as concentrated, if not as prolonged, work as the Final Schools.

The main preparation for the final examination is the writing of the weekly essay. There are plenty of lectures and the student attends such of them as his tutor asks him to attend. But his own private study largely centres round the weekly essay. Every week his tutor directs him to write an essay on some subject connected with the course. These essays are planned so as to cover the whole field required for the final examination. Week after week the student studies up some part of his subject and writes on it a brief essay. He has also a certain amount of reading to do for his tutor during the

vacation. As soon as term begins he is examined in the work which he has done during the vacation. But the main emphasis is upon the weekly essay. Sometimes when a student is trying to cover a long course in a short time he may write two or even three essays in a week.

This insistence upon studying a subject by writing essays on it has the peculiar value of making a student not merely acquire a number of facts but discuss them. He comes to know the art of studying a subject by himself. As in an Indian University he does not depend wholly on the professor for his work. He learns to work for himself by expressing his ideas at every stage of his study. His understanding of his subject becomes clearer. Also there is no tendency, as with many Indian students, to neglect work during the greater part of the course and to strain and strive for success for a few weeks just before the examination. The weekly meeting with the tutor imposes upon the student the obligation to keep on working steadily during the whole course.

There is a habit in Oxford with regard to examinations which may well be commended to students in India. It is that of taking a brief holiday immediately before an examination. A student who has to appear for some examination takes a few days off to get refreshed and strengthened. He does not rush pell-mell into the Examination

Hall after burning the midnight oil, weary of body and dizzy in mind. This brief holiday taken so near the examination clears the mind and sends the student with refreshed energy to face the task which is ahead of him. His mind is not burdened with a vast amount of minute information which has been rapidly and feverishly acquired during the few days immediately preceding the examination, and which is as quickly forgotten. On the other hand, he comes really prepared to bestow upon the work in the examination room the best powers of his mind.

## CHAPTER IV

### **Teachers and Their Methods**

Teachers in the Universities of the West are generally scholars first and teachers afterwards. Each one of them marks off some field of learning for himself and aims to become an expert in it. By years and years of patient, plodding labour he acquires a thorough grasp of the subject, to the study of which he has dedicated his life. With the enthusiasm and zeal of a religious votary he worships at his shrine of learning. He is not satisfied with leading, so to speak, a hand-to-mouth intellectual existence, preparing just what is needed for his lectures and pouring out in the class room the information which he has so hastily acquired; such inadequate preparation results in careless and worthless lecturing. But he aims to become an authority on the subject on which he is lecturing. Every new book which appears on his subject he reads with avidity. He works carefully through every detail. Often he himself writes books or articles in the encyclopædias. He makes it a point, at least in public, not to stray into other fields than his own. When a German professor of Romance Languages expressed great interest in Mysticism,

he was asked whether he could not write an article stating his views. After some reluctance he agreed to do so but on the condition that his name was not to be attached to the article. He was afraid that if he signed the article people would think that he was dabbling in a subject which was not his.

Accounts of some professors I knew in America may be of interest here. I think of a professor in America who, if not distinguished for originality of mind, was certainly a man of wide reading and abundant research. Once when he had to write a book he took from the library a cart load of books for reference and consultation. One evening he kindly allowed us to visit him in his home and explained the methods of his work. Like his lectures, which were most orderly and systematic, his work in his study was rigorously organized. He told us that he took in thirty different magazines bearing on his subject. All these magazines were carefully arranged and their contents were fully indexed. If he was writing on any matter he could easily lay hold of whatever had been written on it in these magazines. His notes on different subjects were carefully filed, and he could without difficulty gather together the results of his study bearing on any particular point.

Another professor of international fame was quite of the opposite type. His lectures and methods of work were anything but orderly and systematic.



One day he would come to the class and give a lecture on some point which was apparently of great moment to him but which was remote from the elementary work of beginners. Another day he might read out to the class with a running commentary an article contributed by him to some learned journal. On some other occasion he might bring to the class a new book which had been just published and begin to review its contents. Sometimes he might even stay at home, forgetting his class and absorbed in some book! Though so erratic in his work, he was sought after by students for he was a genuine scholar. Learning was the great quest of his life. To come in contact with him was to come in contact with a fine mind, keen, alert, critical. A lecture from him was a treat, for it opened up new vistas of thought.

I think of another professor whose work was of another type. He believed in making his students work hard, for he assigned to us a number of stiff books for reading and we knew that at the end of the term he would find out from our examination papers how well or ill we had read them. But in the class room he did not give the details contained in these books. These details we had to gather for ourselves in the course of our own study. But in a masterly and impressive manner he sought to instil into our minds the general principles by frequent repetition, by apt illustration and by forceful

speaking. He always made the important facts stand out clear and vivid before us. There was not a single dull moment in his class. The atmosphere of his class was alive with his zeal and interest and we profited by being thus initiated into the fundamentals of a subject by a clear and enthusiastic teacher of great learning.

There is a large assemblage of distinguished scholars in Oxford and their lectures are co-ordinated extremely well. On Theology, for instance, there were during any term as many as thirty or forty men lecturing, each an authority on the particular subject or on the particular period on which he was speaking. When we went to Oxford at the commencement of a term we could see a list of all these lectures; the places where they were being given and the hours were set forth. These lectures were generally open to all the members of the University. As the scope and treatment of the subject would not be clear from the title of the course, the first lecture would be devoted to the explanation of the work to be done in the course and at the end of that lecture the students who proposed to take the course would be asked to hand in their names. Thus in the first lecture there was a kind of sifting.<sup>1</sup> It would be more largely attended than the other lectures of the course as a good many men would come in to see what the course would be like and to make up their minds as to whether they

should take it or not. After the first lecture the freedom ends and those who sign up for the course are expected to attend regularly, though if a student misses lectures he is not taken to task. As these lectures are the result of considerable study some of the tutors from other colleges may also be present to hear them.

These scholars are attached to one or other of the colleges. Apart from the few University professors, whose status is very high, most of the men who lecture at Oxford are tutors in the colleges.

While in America an attempt is made to make the work in the class room interesting and attractive, the tendency in Oxford is to make it dry and formal. In America there is a sort of competition among the professors as to whose lectures are most popular and most largely attended. This makes some of the professors play to the gallery, both in the choice of their subjects and in their method of treatment. This however must not be considered to be the general rule. But it may be considered a general rule that the professor aims to set forth his subject in as interesting a way as possible. In some cases this may lead to a certain amount of superficiality. But at Oxford the aim of the teacher is to set forth as accurately as possible his conclusions. He may have a carefully written out manuscript to which he will adhere closely in the course of his

lecture with the result that the lecture becomes rather dry, though it may be a piece of great learning.

The point which impressed me about the professors in Germany was that they were great linguists. Every teacher in a University aims to know as many languages as possible. It is a common thing for a scholar to know as many as twenty-five languages including dialects. This does not mean that he is able to speak all these twenty-five languages, for a good many of them may be dead languages, and of some even of the modern languages his grasp will not be enough to enable him to speak them. But he will have mastered the rudiments of the grammars of those various languages, and by a skilful and patient use of dictionaries he will be able to read books written in them. Thus he has access at once to all the literature written in different languages on the subject in which he is interested.

The German is a linguist not merely because he has a greater capacity for learning a language, but also because he has greater courage in dealing with the difficulties of a new language. The average Englishman always prefers to speak in his own language. Even if he is in a foreign country he will make his language carry him as far as it could. If he knows some other language tolerably well he will not speak it unless he cannot help it. The average German is just the opposite. Even if he knows

another language only a little he will use every opportunity to speak it. He will stumble and stutter in another language and will find that more interesting than speaking fluently in his own. He will throw himself into a new language, whose depths he has not plumbed, taking his courage in both hands, and ready to sink or swim.

Speaking of German professors and of their fondness for languages, I remember a professor who decided to learn Sanskrit during a period of convalescence. He was not allowed to do any strenuous intellectual work; so he thought he would learn Sanskrit as a pastime! Years afterwards he described the reading of Valmiki's *Ramayana* in the original Sanskrit as one of the greatest experiences of his life.

It may be said, in passing, that the average student in the West is more ready to study a new language than the average student in India. I noticed this particularly in America. We in India are brought up on two languages, the vernacular and English. There are very few college graduates who know more than two languages; and these two languages are acquired slowly and gradually in the way children acquire them. The vernacular we learn on our mother's lap. English we begin to learn from our very childhood and go on learning. We are not at all familiar with the process of taking up a new language in mature years and of mastering

it scientifically. A college student in America or Europe will attempt, after studying Sanskrit grammar three times a week for one or two years, to read simple Sanskrit books. Then steadily he will get into the more difficult books feeling his way through grammars and dictionaries. Such methods of study are quite unfamiliar to us.

While a tribute of praise must be paid to the great learning and exact scholarship of college teachers in the West, it must be confessed that rarely have any of them turned out to be creative artists of the first rank—poets, novelists, essayists, whose writings are read with pleasure by the multitude. They are experts and write mainly for experts. They are dealing all the time with abstruse subjects in a more or less technical way, aiming at the greatest possible accuracy. Living in a world of their own, breathing an atmosphere of books, they often lose that vital and dynamic touch with people which is so necessary for creative writing. They do not develop their imagination, for fear that imagination may make them stray far from the realm of exactitude. The creative artist is always under the spell of imagination. He is not merely interested in putting down things as they are. He idealises them. His vision throws a glamour over them. His insight penetrates through the externals into the inner heart. Even if he is a grim realist, who believes in writing about things as

they are, he has considerable skill in portraying the ever-new and ever-changing views of reality into which these things as they are constantly shift and tumble as in a kaleidoscope. The world of reality as it exists in his mind appears invested with hues of singular charm and variety, and what we behold is not a dry formal reproduction of reality but a glorious and charming vision which has been brought into existence by a genius. Such new ideas, though they are old, stimulate us, for they are shot through with a strange power. The average scholar in the Universities of the West neither aims at such an imaginative interpretation of life as kindles feeling and sets the heart aglow, nor succeeds in attaining it if he ever sets out on the enterprise. The calls on his time are so numerous, the round of duties to which he is tied is so exacting, the ideals of education which he is asked to impart to students are so cut and dried that even in the best Universities he has no scope and freedom to develop his imagination. That unrestrained, roaming, free spirit by which alone creative and imaginative writing flourishes cannot be found in Western Universities. This is not necessarily a criticism, but it is wise to see the ultimate consequence of the ideals of learning which are necessitated when men come together as teachers and pupils in any large centre, where the work in the very nature of things has to be carefully organized.

The life of a teacher in the West is exceedingly

strenuous. Not that he has many hours to teach. As far as lectures go he may not have more than one a day to give during term-time. But unless he keeps up his reading and puts a great deal of work into his lectures he cannot continue to hold his position. There is the keenest possible competition, conscious and unconscious, among the intellectual leaders in the West. The whole level of intellectual life is altogether higher in the West than in India. We have in our country a great many gifted scholars whose equals in depth and breadth of scholarship cannot easily be found anywhere in the world. They are men of extraordinary intellectual gifts and have made the best possible use of them in every way. But the average level of education is exceedingly low. The number of educated men who can read books and discuss critically currents of thought is very small. In the West, on the other hand, education is very much more common and a great deal is expected of any intellectual leader, whether he is a professor or a man of letters. Only a man of genuine ability who has developed to their full extent his innate gifts can fight his way up above the rank and file of educated people to a position of leadership as an intellectual teacher. For this reason any one who aspires to teach in a University has to work tremendously hard. Year in and year out he steadily acquires stores of knowledge and as he advances in age and in wisdom he slowly



finds the doors of influence opening to him. The young immature scholar has little or no place in the recognized life of a University. Any place which a brilliant young man may hold is due as much to his fine ability as to his promise of solid work in the future. He is, that is, respected not so much for what he is as for what he will become.

To compensate their professors for the heavy demands which are made from them, American colleges and Universities allow them to take what is called the sabbatical year. Once every seven years the professor is released from the duties of the college and set free to recuperate, to roam in fresh lands or to enter new fields of learning, which last pursuit, followed as it is in the freedom of the sabbatical year, is in itself rest and change. During this year men travel abroad, see new sights, establish new points of contact with the learned world, and by combining pleasure and work, away from the appointed duties of the lecture room, come back refreshed for a further term of hard work.

The financial emoluments of the University or college professor are hardly adequate to the enormous toil which these gifted men put in. A professor of much renown at Harvard University once complained that a carpenter got more money in a year than he himself did. The pay of a University teacher is not at all proportionate to the degree of intellectual excellence which is expected from him.

In no country is this more evident than in Germany. A young scholar who aspires to become a professor at a University has to serve his apprenticeship for years as a *privatdozent*, which means a private teacher. He is licensed by the University to give lectures and to charge a small fee for admission. The precarious amount of money which the few students whom he is able to attract dole out to him is all that he hopes to earn by his work. This period of waiting may continue for several years. In some cases the aspiring scholar never gets beyond the stage of being a private teacher. The amount of money made by a private teacher is so low that he can hardly live in comfort. But it is through this period of training that every teacher must reach a University professorship. During these years of work as private teacher he must make his mark as a scholar if he ever expects to be called to be a professor. He must study and lecture and write, and men must see that he has genuine gifts of scholarship. These days of terrible grind, however hard they may be upon the private teacher, form the solid basis upon which the rich scholarship of the famous professor of later years rests.

All this makes it clear that anyone who seeks to be a teacher in a University must first and foremost be filled with the zeal for learning. He must be in the job for the love of it. If he turns to teaching in

a college as a soft job, he will find himself wholly mistaken. It is because men love scholarship that they seek the work of teaching, and they are prepared to pay the price. That men are professors because they love to be so is clearer in some instances than in others. A professor, for instance, in America always came to give his lectures in a stately limousine driven by a liveried chauffeur. He was one of the hardest working professors on the faculty and he threw himself heart and soul into his work. Not only did he do a good deal of intellectual work for the institution but when it was in need of money he gave it. In such a case it was perfectly clear that he loved his work and was in it for no other reason than that.

## CHAPTER V

### **Teachers and Students**

Freedom is the keynote of college life in America. This freedom is found in the ample choice which each student has of subjects in any course of study which he may pursue. There are several subjects open to him for work in connexion with any degree and he may choose from among these according to his capacity and taste. But what is more relevant to our purpose in this chapter is the fact that in the class room considerable freedom prevails. In the course of a lecture any student may ask questions relating to the subject which is being taught. These interruptions are welcomed by the teacher as so many opportunities for him to clear up points which have proved difficult to the students.

But, curiously enough, apart from this contact between teacher and student in the class room, there are no regular opportunities for students to get close to their teachers. The relation between a teacher and his students is very largely that between a lecturer and his audience. Students come in larger or smaller groups and go away after hearing what the teacher has to say. There are practically no

contacts between teachers and students outside the class room.

There is, however, one important exception. In a seminar there is far more freedom than in any class. A seminar is the name given to a small group, meeting for intensive study. There are only a few students in a seminar, and each student comes not merely as a listener but as an active co-operator in the work.

I remember with great pleasure a seminar which I attended with a well-known professor at Harvard. He was a man of great learning and in his advanced years still retained his zeal and zest for scholarship. Sometimes I used to see him walking along a street poring over a book. He asked the seminar to meet in his home. After dinner at about 8 o'clock at night the small group of students could be seen wending their way to his home in all kinds of weather. He would be sitting there in some deep comfortable chair smoking away at his pipe. All round the room would be rows of books and learned magazines would be in evidence everywhere. He would not have the air of a teacher speaking to his class but rather that of a genial host entertaining his visitors. We met once a week. Every week there was a considerable amount of reading to do and in the couple of hours that we spent with him, we had to tell him what we had been reading. He had always plenty of interesting comment to make and

the time was spent most delightfully in a profitable talk with a fine scholar. It is only on occasions like these, which are very rare, that students in America really come to see and to hear their professors intimately.

In Germany there is another way besides the seminar in which the personal influence of a teacher spreads. In an old country like England, universities have a historic tradition and men choose this or that university on account of the attraction which it exercises over them. Some men may go to Oxford because they think that it is the place to go. Some others may go to Oxford because their fathers and their brothers went there. Some may go because they think that certain subjects like classical literature, philosophy and theology are taught there better than anywhere else. When a man chooses his University he is loyal to it all through his course of study and ever afterwards.

In Germany a man goes to a University not because that University has a name or attraction but because he wants to hear some particular professor who is lecturing there. If he is a man of great scholarship there may be as many as four hundred students attending his lectures. These men will be at the University mainly for the purpose of hearing these lectures and so they will flock in large numbers to his courses. Neither in England nor in America is this practice of going to a

University to hear a particular teacher largely followed.

In Germany the practice also prevails of the students wandering from University to University. A man may spend the four years of a college course in four different places. This practice naturally tends to break up college and University loyalty. But it gives the student a wider outlook, by taking him to different centres of learning and by throwing him into contact with different scholars.

Further, every German professor has his hours of consultation which he notifies. During these hours students are at liberty to go and see him.

The reverence which German students feel towards their professors reminded me very forcibly of the reverence which in India a *Shishya* is taught to have for his *Guru*. Speaking generally, in America the fine business man who is the head of several corporations and manages effectively immense business concerns appeals to the popular imagination. The University professor belongs to the opposite type of mentality. He is not concerned with practical policies but always deals with theoretical interests. For this reason perhaps a professor does not count for much in the popular imagination. Admired he may be with the enthusiasm of youth, but he is never revered. In England the figures who capture the imagination of the men at a University are the sportsmen. Those who row in the University

boat exercise a stronger spell over the young men at the University than the most learned scholars. The reading man will speak with restrained enthusiasm of this or that scholar, but then the reading man's verdict counts for scarcely anything. In Germany the scholar has a place all his own. As already pointed out, hundreds of men may go to a University because they are attracted by a single man. It is easy to see how this practice, which so largely determines the movements of students, will in itself instil deep reverence. The German student seems to have almost a sense of awe in the presence of a famous scholar. He considers it a privilege to be allowed to come into close contact at all with the teacher, and every movement and gesture and word bespeaks this attitude of reverence.

But it is at Oxford that regular and abundant opportunities are provided by the colleges for intimate intercourse between teacher and student. As has already been pointed out, the main work of the student at the University centres round the weekly essay. Every week for an hour the student goes to his tutor either by himself or along with one or two other men. The tutor receives them in his own study. He himself is seated in some comfortable chair near a blazing fire if it is a cold day and the students are offered comfortable chairs near him. The essays are read out by the students and informally discussed in this homely atmosphere.



It is a privilege for the students to come to know their tutor in the privacy of his own den. The books and papers scattered in the room all indicate more vividly than any learned lecture could do the real interests of the tutor. A student knocks at the door of his tutor not merely for the weekly essay but occasionally also at other times. When term begins he goes to his tutor to get advice from him as to the lectures he should attend. The tutor, of course, knows about all the scholars lecturing at the University, specially on his subject, and tells the student who is more or less a stranger whose lectures he should attend. The tutor becomes a sort of friend, counsellor and guide.

A tutor in any particular college will know not merely his own men but also, though in a lesser degree, the other men in the college. Towards the end of every term this is done in a formal and stately fashion. Every student is summoned to meet the entire group of teachers in the college gathered together in awful conclave. The particular hour and minute at which he should appear is announced and a good while before the time mentioned he has to come and wait so as not to miss his chance and thus incur the penalty of a fine. In fear and trepidation he waits expectantly. When his turn comes he is ushered before this august assembly and stands listening to the brief report which his tutor makes about his progress during the term. It is on an

occasion like this that the tutor will sometimes express his hope about the sort of success which he expects his men to score in the examinations. Moving so intimately and closely with his students a tutor will often be able to prophesy to a precise degree the sort of class which they will get in the examinations. If there is a particularly promising student the tutor may tell the company that he will obtain a first class. This public prophecy will spur the student to his utmost effort and encourage him to put his best into the work.

In other ways also the teacher in any particular college will come to know about the students. The teachers themselves come into close touch with each other and compare notes about the students. A good many of the tutors live all through the term in the college itself. Even those who have their own homes in Oxford will have a study in the college and will come to dinner in Hall several days in the week. The daily dinner in the college Hall is a social event. All the teachers sit together in their gowns at the High Table and spend a good deal of time talking things over as they do justice to a hearty repast. After dinner they retire to the Senior Common Room and spend another hour or two in delightful social intercourse. A tutor will invite tutors from other colleges to dine with him, and he will be invited in turn. The dinner in Hall and the social hour in the Senior Common Room provide ample opportunities

for a tutor to know his fellow tutors in his own college as well as those from other colleges. Occasionally old graduates of the University who may be visiting the place are asked to sit at the High Table.

The many opportunities which the tutors have for meeting together provide ample means for the spread of information about the students. Good or bad news about any student of the University—victory in a match, brilliant success in an examination, a fine speech or an escapade—spreads like wild fire among the students as well as the teachers of the University.

In these intimate ways the bonds between the teachers and the taught in Oxford University are welded together most firmly. Here is one strong reason why the education in Oxford is unique.

## CHAPTER VI

### **Academic Discipline**

The life of a student at Oxford is completely hedged round by college and University rules of discipline. Many people tend to make this a criticism against the University. They ask: Are not men at the University old enough to take care of themselves? Should they be held under restraint as if they were mere boys? Freedom ought to govern University life and not discipline.

Without in any way putting up a defence of the elaborate system of discipline which prevails at Oxford, I may here point out that it is largely the remnant of bygone days, when the University was crowded with young men from the wealthiest homes of England, who came to the University not so much to get a degree as to have a good time and to be able to say that they had been at Oxford. Most of these men believed in enjoying themselves. They aimed at having a rollicking good time and devised all sorts of ways to attain that end. In a University filled with men of this type, a complete series of checks had to be invented and enforced, allowing the students to enjoy themselves but not in any bad way.

Since the Great War the atmosphere of the University has largely changed. The democratic spirit has permeated this citadel of English aristocracy. A good many poor men now go to Oxford with the help of scholarships. One of the most vigorous societies now working in Oxford discusses with characteristic Oxford wit and repartee the problems of life from the socialist point of view. Some years ago Ruskin College was established in Oxford to encourage young men from the labouring classes to study in Oxford. With the introduction of such heterogenous elements the old tradition that Oxford is primarily a place of social enjoyment is breaking up, and a greater amount of seriousness is imported into the life of the University. In spite of this gradual change the old-time discipline still prevails as an anomaly in the twentieth century.

We may take a day's life of an undergraduate at Oxford and note that almost every hour of the day he is observing one or other of the University rules. His waking hour is settled for him by compulsory attendance at chapel. All through the day, when attending any University or college function, he wears a gown or, as very often happens, at least carries it on his arm. After eight o'clock at night he must wear the gown not only when he attends some function in college but even when going about in the streets.

After eight o'clock at night the vigilance of the

university authorities increases tenfold! The Senior and Junior Proctors, accompanied by two stalwart men, wander the streets in quest of law-breakers. The Proctors are robed in their ample gowns and wear the academic cap. Their slow perambulation through the town is done with a majestic air. But at any moment the slow, majestic perambulation may change into vigorous and active measures. The two stalwart men, known popularly as bull-dogs, are servants who are there to give chase if necessary. If any undergraduate attempts to evade the powerful hand of the University law, he will find these two sturdy fellows following him effectively however fleet he may be himself. The object of these nightly peregrinations is to discover whether any students are to be found in undesirable places such as taverns. During these hours students may not even go for a cup of innocent coffee to any hotel which is licensed to sell liquor. If they did, they would find themselves in the hands of these alert ubiquitous University police. The reason why the wearing of gowns by University men is insisted on after 8 o'clock is that thus they can more easily be detected.

If the hour at which the student wakes is regulated for him by the University, so is the hour at which he returns home. Young men's steady habits are apt to lapse at these two points, the waking hour and the retiring hour. In a comfortable

bed on a chilly morning it is difficult for the undergraduate to make up his mind to get up. Then the Spirit of the University glides into his room and summons him with a peremptory order to leave the comfort of his bed for morning chapel. The other point at which a young man's steady habits may relax is the hour at which he returns from his evening enjoyment. He has been visiting some friends and has been having a jolly time with them. It is exceedingly hard for him to make up his mind to leave his friends. At that point also the Spirit of the University steps in and beckons him back to his room on pain of the payment of a fine. At 9 o'clock the college doors are closed, and entrance into the college is possible only by rousing up the night porter who will place on record for the benefit of the College Dean the name of the young man who has thus disturbed his slumber, and the hour of the night at which this offence took place. For the student returning to college before midnight the penalty is light. But after midnight a fine of half a crown is levied and sometimes a lecture is given to the delinquent by the Dean. This fine and scolding are not always effective barriers to the expanding enthusiasm of the undergraduate at midnight, for he often defies the law and pays the fine in as resigned a spirit as he would pay the college bills. It ought to be added that the 'gate fines' are paid for the privilege of being let in after the gate is closed and

are increased after 11 o'clock simply to discourage undergraduates from consistently coming in late at night. A definite stigma attaches to the late-comer after midnight, but not before.

Even the student who resides out of college in licensed lodgings is strictly kept under restraint. Those men for whom room is not found in college, particularly the men in the last year of their college course, are allowed to reside outside in rooms authorized by the University. Such a licence is issued only after the size and quality of the rooms, the number of people living in the house and their character have all been taken to account. The landlady keeps a daily record of the student's hour of return at night. This record is sent to the Dean once every week. Thus even though the student who lives in lodgings escapes the vigilant eye of the college porter, he cannot evade the careful record of the landlady.

These restrictions are considerably relaxed when a student gets his B.A. degree. Then he is not compelled to attend chapel and there is no daily noting down of his hour of return at night. But even then he is not mature enough to be provided with a latch key to enable him to let himself into the house where he lodges without waking up the people. That high privilege is given to him only after three more years, when he becomes an M.A. Only then is he considered old enough and mature



enough to go about as he pleases, and to return when he will to his steady abode. From the moment he takes his M.A., the University loosens its iron grip on him !

The college takes good care that its bills are paid. When a man enters a college he has to pay down £30 as caution money. This will always serve as an effective hold on the undergraduate. So effective is this hold and, shall we say, so reliable is the Oxford undergraduate, and so willing are his parents to pay off his debts, that tradesmen even urge him to borrow and are most lenient in regard to the payment of their bills.

There are occasions when the mirth of the Oxford undergraduate breaks out into open violence or wild extravagance. If it should occur to him to light a bonfire, woe to the college furniture ! Chairs and tables begin crackling in the wild tumultuous flames around which begin to gather excited youths. Of course the college gets back the cost of its furniture which goes to make up the rousing bonfire. The undergraduate may feel that he is poorer in his pocket but he certainly does not regret the warm joy, which he had as the fire blazed. For severe offences a man is ' sent down ' and if he is a culprit convicted for some popular crime of riotous mirth a mock funeral is enacted in his honour with all the paraphernalia of a real funeral. His friends and admirers gather together and organize a stately

procession which swells, as it proceeds, with the addition of hundreds of undergraduates.

A word should be said about the peculiar and galling restrictions placed upon women students, who have been aptly described as being one of 'the depressed classes' of the University. They were slowly and with much heart-burning admitted into the sacred precincts of the University. Their present peaceful demeanour and unobtrusive ways remind one of the fundamental condition on which they have been admitted—they may be seen and tolerated, but they must not be heard and their influence must certainly not be felt. Silently must they come to the lectures in the men's colleges and silently and quickly depart after the lectures. They may visit men's rooms for a social hour duly and properly chaperoned; and then the silence which seals their lips on other occasions may for a brief moment be broken, and as far as is possible in the mannish atmosphere of Oxford University, they may be their natural, happy, unrestrained selves. This does not, of course, apply to the pretty women visitors who flit about Oxford in summer term with their bright colours, radiant as summer birds. Of them more later.

Recently a regulation has been passed that there shall not be more than one woman student to every four men students. Through this rule the University proclaims its conviction that Oxford is primarily a

man's place and that women are but tardily and reluctantly, though with an air of assumed courtesy, admitted to it.

It was a great day when, in spite of this unwillingness to yield the 'privileges of Oxford to the eager clamant young women of England, the University decided to give them degrees. But even during the convocation ceremony the woman undergraduate must recede into the background. In the Convocation Hall the front rows are all filled with men and their friends. The back rows are crowded with undergraduate women. During convocation, as at other times, the woman at Oxford is made to feel that this is not her real sphere.

When it was decided that women should be given degrees, and that they could wear gowns, there was much talk as to the character of the gown which would be designed for them. Many felt that such a gown should be designed as would add charm and beauty to them and would be a joy for ever. All these hopes, however, were dashed to the ground when, lo and behold, an ugly short gown, practically the same as the men's gown, was designed. The man's undergraduate gown is bad enough; he goes slinking about in shame at being still an undergraduate; if he aspires to wear a flowing, graceful robe he must wait until his days as an undergraduate are over. If the man's undergraduate gown is bad, the woman's undergraduate gown is worse. Outside

Oxford everything is designed to set off women at their best. In Oxford everything is designed to minimise the disturbing influence of their charm on the mind of youth. The undergraduate woman's gown is anything but a thing of beauty. Its ugly and straitened length dangles over a beautiful dress as a mark and symbol of Oxford's stamp of inferiority on women folk.

## CHAPTER VII

### **Social Life**

Like a pleasant breeze, laden with fragrance, which blows on a hot day, social joys relieve the strain and monotony of lectures and examinations. A college in the West is not merely a place where men go for lectures. It is a place where they live a happy life together. In India a college is still primarily a place for hard work. The hostels which fortunately are springing up everywhere are indeed centres of a happy common life. But even hostels are not yet closely related to their colleges. Some hostels are at a distance from their colleges which as a result become largely centres for lectures. But in the West a college is the centre at once of arduous work and joyous comradeship. This social life is not, of course, always at its highest pitch. Fire in a hearth blazes up at times, the logs crackling merrily and at other times there is hardly any warmth perceptible from the glowing wood. By social life in a college, I do not mean the occasions when riotous mirth prevails but the constant and steady intercourse of man with man outside the class room.

The dining Hall whether in America or in England is second only to the lecture room in

the influence it wields in college life. If the lecture room is the centre from which intellectual life radiates, the dining hall is the vitalising and dynamic point at which the social forces of the college gather together. You may not know hosts of men well enough to meet them in their rooms. You may not have time to seek out new friends. But in the dining Hall you are thrown together with all sorts and conditions of men; and you are supposed to be at your best and so is your neighbour. A college meal is first and foremost a social function. There is a pleasant buzz of conversation and you join in.

But then no lasting friendships are ever formed at table! They may begin there, but they grow and mature in the living rooms. Youth is the period of friendships. Later life creates innumerable conflicting interests—family, home, work. But the college man is free to choose his chums and lavish endless time on them. Within the sanctity of the college room many a ~~sacred~~ rite of friendship is performed. Secrets are divulged, ideals are formed, aspirations are revealed.

It is a proud day in America or Europe when a student is invited by another to visit his home during the vacation: a proud day for both, to the one invited since the invitation gracefully endorses the friendship; to the one who invites as no greater pleasure can be in store for him than to see the joy of his people over his newly-acquired friend. They have

heard a good deal of him in letters and during previous vacations. The friend himself has heard a good deal about them in those intimate hours when college men forget their work and revel in ease and joy in their rooms. Now they meet and happy is their meeting. For a few days there is a round of festivities—happy and intimate talks at table and afterwards, pleasant rambles through the surrounding country, visits to historic buildings and places of interest, social functions. The days move along on silken wings. The routine of college reading appointed for the holidays becomes dim and distant. What is evident is the happy, unlimited, endless intercourse of friend with friend, both brimming with boyish delight in the beautiful atmosphere of a home. These visits stand out in one's memory of college life like vivid points of light in a region already flooded with brightness. In college, friendships are formed ; at home during the vacations they are felicitously crowned with the approval of those for whom one cares most.

There is an excellent college spirit in some of the small colleges in America. Life in the hostels and in all the athletic, literary and social clubs is wholesome and good. Young men and women share in several activities and become intimately acquainted. Four years of such life give real education in the best sense.

In America with so much of co-education, deep

friendships spring up between men and women. Friendships some of them remain to the end, close, intimate, and strong and some end at the altar. About these latter college friendships between men and women, there is not the same dramatic intensity, at least as far as appearances are concerned, as about courtship elsewhere. The couple are too much under the spell of the University to forget everything but themselves. So long as they are at the University, they must remember—at least the University.

But marriage apart, co-education is one of the happiest influences in American University life. At Oxford, as I have already said, the woman student is restrained and confined. But in America she moves, not indeed with the stately dignity which she has on social occasions, but with her innate charm and unrestrained grace. She is as free as any man, free to study, to enjoy, to live. Her presence in the class room lends to it a pretty dignity and during festive occasions she naturally steps into her usual place of queenly leadership, her beauty set off to its best effect; she ceases to be a mere student like the other students and becomes the centre of a circle of admiring and devoted men.

In Germany the corporations are centres of social life. The students live in lodgings, but they meet in their corporations which are really student clubs. Each corporation has a distinctive character—one



may be a singing corporation, another a fencing corporation and so forth. The doors leading to these corporations are zealously guarded and admission is coveted as a high privilege. The duel is still the badge of manliness and students proudly exhibit the scars on their faces acquired during their fencing bouts.

During the summer months parties of German students go out for long walks. Often they spend a whole day like this, carrying their provisions with them in their knapsacks. Women also sometimes join these walking parties. They ramble along for miles, every now and then breaking out into jolly singing. Unlike the English or American student, the German student does not know the wild abandon of youthful sports and to many these long walks through the country are their only exercise.

At Oxford social life makes the University atmosphere wonderfully translucent and glorious. In other Universities social life is an incident, in Oxford it is breath and life. The very tradition of Oxford which in some ways is so stern and austere, as we have already seen, leaves plenty of room for social joys. Teas and dinners are almost as important functions in Oxford as the lectures. You cannot walk fifty yards but some friend greets you warmly and lures you to some pleasant spot for a jolly hour. If you are engaged he makes you come some other

time. Every day is thus crowded with various social engagements and the young man who is supposed to be busy reading is actually busy fulfilling these many social calls which keep pressing upon him from all sides from eager and kindly friends. The days thus speed along filled with the innumerable joys of social intercourse and it is with a pang that one arrives at the end of term to leave Oxford's hospitable precincts for the vacation. The spirit of jolly comradeship is written everywhere in Oxford. It is there in the streets. It glows with welcome from the blazing hearth of some friend. It presides as the genius of the crowded Common Room crowded with numerous men. It hovers over the river.

Oxford stands for culture, not merely for learning or even for education. And culture is best acquired by the contact of mind with mind. These social functions are the places where Oxford's characteristic wit is sharpened. Around the table, at dinner, sunk comfortably in some deep chair, resting in a punt under some shady tree with the limpid waters flowing beneath, the Oxford man seeks to understand the riddle of the Universe. There is no subject under heaven or on earth which he is afraid to tackle—politics, economics, literature, religion. All these in turn provoke his thought. With the audacity characteristic of youth, he seeks to sum up some complex problem in a vivid and luminous phrase, to kill some common fallacy with a clever

rapier thrust. He may or may not succeed in doing this but he certainly acquires culture. Because of thus courageously learning to face every question and listening to what others have to say, though they may be of quite a different way of thinking from himself, his spirit is enlarged and his mental horizons move out into dim distances. Such frequent interchange of ideas spells broad expanses of thought. Sometimes an Oxford scholar is spoken of as buried. Buried he is from the tumult of London's roaring life but not buried from the vitalising currents of human lives. There are book-worms at Oxford as elsewhere. But these book-worms do not thrive in a musty atmosphere of age-long dust and dim darkness but flit about in sunny regions of human gladness. The busiest scholar will kindle with scintillating wit at table and the sparks that fly will illumine the most learned den.

It must be confessed that these abundant opportunities for social life in Oxford engender gossip. They give culture, it is true, but they also encourage the tendency to talk about one's fellows ! The human intellect is not always able to poise itself on dizzy heights of speculation. It plunges into the whirlpool of life. Plenty of time for talk inevitably means plenty of time for talk about other people. Culture and gossip are as close as twins, being born of the same mother, Leisure. News

about any student, whether good or bad, spreads through the whole of Oxford with remarkable speed on this account.

During the summer months Oxford becomes even gayer and merrier than usual. The world of Nature takes on wonderful hues under the magic touch of Spring, and lures people into the gay out-of-doors. This is the time when the fathers and mothers and sisters of the men come to see them. These visitors may be in Oxford for a week or so. That time is spent in seeing all the interesting sights. The sober streets of Oxford begin to bustle with innumerable visitors in their gay and bright dresses. Every man's room becomes a centre of joy. The river is crowned with its throng of happy visitors. During the summer term Nature in Oxford becomes profuse and lavish in a wonderful way. The University likewise throws her generous and gracious doors wide open. In response to their joint invitation so heartily given, hundreds come in to see Oxford ecstatic with the rapture of social joys.

## CHAPTER VIII

### **Religion and Student Life**

The problem of dealing with different religions does not exist in the Universities of the West. The official religion is, of course, Christianity. As to how far Christianity is a force making for good among the students must now be told.

In Harvard University there is a chapel where services are held every day during term time. Well-known religious leaders are asked to come and spend a week at a time holding the services. Attendance is purely voluntary and during week days there are not many students who attend the services. But on Sundays the chapel is well-filled and the hour of worship is solemn and inspiring.

The Young Men's Christian Association has its building on the campus and its steady activities all the year round count as a powerful factor in the religious life of the students. The Secretary and his helpers seize every opportunity to bring the message of the Christian religion before the students in an attractive form.

The fact that several large Universities in the West have their department of theological studies must be reckoned with. State Universities in America are not, however, allowed to teach theology.

In the theological departments of the Universities hundreds of ministers and preachers are trained. There are innumerable theological colleges of varying degrees of efficiency outside the Universities, and through these also hundreds of prospective religious workers pass. The difference between the Theological Colleges and the theological departments of the Universities lies largely in the character of the environment. In the separate Theological Colleges the life is more intimate and compact. In the Universities a great many more interests challenge the attention. Different types of students mingle together. The professors live in an atmosphere of scholastic learning.

Considerable influence is exercised upon the theological students by the other students. The theological student is taken out of any groove in which he may tend to move by his contact with several types of students, some intending to enter law, some medicine, some business and so on. These contacts count in broadening the outlook of the student whose main concern is the study and teaching of religion. The same happens to the theological professors. They too are made to revise their values in the light of experiences in other departments of study and life, which all the time impinge upon them. A professor at a University moves amongst a great number of scholars interested in diverse studies, and this contact must spell for him breadth of culture.

What is more to our purpose in this chapter is the influence which the existence of the theological department has upon the religious life of the University. The intellectual importance of religion is impressed on the popular imagination by this close affiliation of theological with other studies. Religion is not the affair of the fanatic and the bigot only. It is not some extravagant experience which only the illiterate and the semi-educated may indulge in. It is a subject of supreme importance for the human mind to investigate. The problems with which it is concerned are as vital and as complex as any problem with which science or law or literature may deal. The intellect of man must address itself with all the force which it possesses to the living issues of religion if they are to be properly understood. No sloppy study will take us to the heart of religion. If we are to understand the height and the depth and the breadth of the Christian experience which has been lived through the ages, in all its thoughts and forms, we must come apart and devote years of close application to its study. Only then can we begin even dimly to appreciate the glory and the magnificence of the Christian heritage.

Whatever the faults of the theological students may be, and they are many, these students are a band of zealous devotees. They have felt the call of God to dedicate themselves to His service. Religion counts with them profoundly. It is to them the sum

of all life. It is so momentous that it is worthwhile for them to give up every other interest and every other ambition in life for its sake. There may be times when a theological student loses sight of the gleam which at first beckoned him on to this noble calling, but in an atmosphere where at least with others the gleam is still bright there is no danger of his sinking into lassitude. The presence of a body of students, small though it may be, who have decided, with all the enthusiasm of which youth is capable, that nothing is more worth while in the world than the study and teaching of religion must impress their fellow students with the power of religion to mould lives. A man who is absorbed in his scientific studies must reckon with his neighbour to whom the study of religion appeals with such tremendous force. If he is fair, he cannot dismiss the enthusiasm of his fellow student as mere bigotry, but must pause to consider its real significance.

The presence in the University of a number of professors who have devoted their lives to the study of religious subjects must likewise exert an influence altogether good upon the religious life of the University. Some of these men are the intellectual leaders of religious advance in the country. By their books and by their lectures they make clear to others the implications of religious experience. While there is a danger of their becoming scholastic and bookish, it must be acknowledged that they have



a remarkable capacity for dealing with the intellectual phases of religion. And religion stirs the whole of man's being into activity. His intellect functions in religion just as much as his feeling and will. The theological professor at a University is a specialist in the complex intellectual issues of religion. His services are brought into requisition from time to time at the University, and students of all classes hear from him expositions of what religion is. It is not merely theological students but also others who profit by his immense learning and profound thought. His presence at the University provides innumerable opportunities for students to come to know a thoughtful man who has pondered deeply the experiences of religion. These opportunities they might not otherwise have enjoyed.

It is however chiefly in student camps and conferences held during the summer months that a powerful impetus to the religious life of students is given. In America every year student conferences are held at different centres for college men. Beautiful spots like Northfield, Silver Bay and Eaglesmere are chosen for the purpose, and for a few days college men and women are summoned apart to face in conference the call of God. Powerful addresses on religion are given. Study circles are run in which the problems facing young men are frankly discussed by small groups. There is ample joy, now quiet, now uproarious. In this atmosphere

of consecrated joy and peace, tense with prayer and expectation, many a college man for the first time in his life realizes the importance of religion. For the first time he responds to the stirrings of the God within. He may, if the awakening is a powerful one, dedicate himself at once to a life of religious service. At these Conferences he will hear innumerable calls to missionary work in India, China or Africa. To one or other of these calls he may respond, and find that his whole religious life has entered loftier heights by his accepting the challenge to take up a difficult form of service in an unknown land far from his home and loved ones. These Conferences are to the religious lives of the students what a source is to its river. On some remote inaccessible height a stream slowly oozes and gathers volume, from thence to flow down to the plains to scatter fertility; so on these beautiful quiet spots, away from the pressure of study, a great many students begin to have a rich experience of religion, an experience which flows on for years helping them and helping others.

What I have said so far of religion in Harvard holds true also of religion in Oxford. If anything, the status of theological studies is higher in Oxford than in Harvard. Religion in many forms holds sway over the historic University. Several distinguished theological scholars, to whom the study of religion is of greater importance than any other

study, are constantly lecturing in Oxford. There are several churches, old and historic and associated with many sacred memories. In these churches services are held every Sunday, and special efforts are made during term to attract University men. Innumerable meetings addressed by religious leaders take place every term, and at these meetings the young men of the University hear the call of religion voiced with varying accents.

One such series of religious meetings stands out in my memory. Every Sunday evening for several weeks a prominent religious thinker came to Oxford to give an address. To one of these meetings the distinguished Roman Catholic theologian and scholar, Baron F. von Hügel, was invited. The friend who arranged for the meeting was very doubtful as to its success. The Baron was a difficult speaker to listen to. He had a turgid style of his own and plunged into the deepest of waters without any hesitation. He was not by any means a man to catch the popular mind. It was thought that a small but interested audience might be in the hall to greet him. Great was our surprise when the large hall in which he was announced to speak was packed to its utmost capacity, a great many men standing. The series of addresses on religion and life, of which this was one, was eagerly and attentively listened to by crowds of students.

In addition to the innumerable religious meetings

and services in Oxford there are informal meetings in men's rooms to talk about religion. If a man has a religious leader visiting him, he will invite to his room fifteen or twenty of his friends. After a cup of tea or coffee, they will sit informally around the speaker and listen to what he has to say. These informal meetings are the arteries through which the currents of religion are constantly coursing through the University.

In England also the Summer Conferences of the Student Christian Movement are of great importance. Swanwick is hallowed with precious memories for every student in England who has at all faced fairly and squarely the demands of religion. The atmosphere of Swanwick is exceedingly informal. The men live in tents in intimate groups. The meals are served in a large tent and are occasions where much excitement and mirth prevail. In the tent for meetings a different spirit is always present. Distinguished speakers from different parts of the country earnestly plead with the men and women students assembled before them to face the problems of life in the presence of God. Thus for many a student Swanwick marks the decisive hour when the important step towards God is taken.

## CHAPTER IX

### **Earning One's Way Through College**

This characteristic feature of American education needs to be described at some length. The idea behind it is that any student who is too poor to afford a college education should be given opportunities even while attending college to earn enough money to help him along. Perhaps in no other country is such a system possible, at least on such a large scale as that on which it is followed in America. America is a new country with a great deal of work to be done and with but a few people to do it. So there are all types of work which students may do and for which they are paid. The remuneration given is also high enough to induce students to take up such work. In an old country like England, for instance, crowded with people, there is not the same abundant opportunities for students to earn money, even if this ideal were placed before them. This is not to say that the practice should not be followed in other countries. Even if the ideal should be accepted widely it cannot be followed to the same large extent as in America. But there are thousands of young men in India who would do well to earn their way through college.

Earning one's way through college as now done in America does not necessarily mean that the student is very poor. A great many men from homes of comparative affluence earn some money, especially during the holidays. There is no disgrace attached to the practice. The man who works his way through is not despised. On the other hand, he is respected as being plucky and is helped by the people with whom he comes in contact. They admire him because he has the desire to be independent and is prepared to put in a lot of work for the sake of his education. Occasionally even very wealthy men may be found working in this way. I heard, for instance, of a student who was given a liberal allowance by his rich father. He spent all this money in making merry with his friends and then began to work in order to get the necessary money to meet the college bills.

Students will take up any sort of work for which they have an aptitude. When I went first to America I asked an Indian student one day what he had been doing. He told me that he had been working in the library. This was holiday time and I admired the studious habits of my friend. Afterwards I found that, to earn money, he spent several hours every day during the holidays taking down the books in the library and dusting them. Another Indian student was always wrapped comfortably in bed in the morning hours. This was because

every evening he spent several hours waiting in a restaurant taking the orders of customers, supplying them with food, removing the dishes and so on. Another student told me that he spent the summer in selling some special kind of desk for the use of children. He would take a sample and go from home to home. He explained that he did not receive a warm welcome everywhere. As a matter of fact when the door was opened to let him in, he took care to stand well within the room to explain the object of his visit. Even if the person in the home was not very interested in the desk he would have to listen to the glowing account given by the enterprising student of the advantages of using such a desk. One student was in charge of our laundry arrangements. He collected the dirty clothes of the students, made a list of them and had them ready for the man from the laundry when he called. When the clothes were returned after the wash, the student would sort them out again and have small parcels ready for his fellow students. Another student was in charge of the dining room. He would not merely buy the stores and give the orders to the cook but also serve at table. Waiting at table by students is quite common. Another student worked in a photographer's studio. Some men, and particularly women, students earn money by shorthand and typewriting.

We may say that, generally, almost every

college student does some work during the holidays. A good many men go out into the country and work as farmers' hands. They help in doing the many different kinds of work which are required on a farm. They may work as waiters in summer hotels. The average rate of payment is about 50 cents per hour, that is, about Rs 1-6. When a student comes back to college he may have saved about 300 or 400 dollars. This money he will keep in a bank and draw from time to time. If he still needs money he may work for two or three hours every day during term time. This kind of work he will not take up unless he is absolutely forced to by financial circumstances. But work in the summer is more common.

I should like to close this chapter with a brief account of different types of work done by Indian students. Coming as they do from personal experience they give a vivid idea of this valuable part of American education.

One student writes :

'My summer work was chiefly confined to a church in the village of Gaysville, Vermont. This is one of the most picturesque States, and in my travels I was constantly reminded of the mountainous districts of Ceylon. There are, however, no waterfalls of any magnitude, and in order to satisfy my curiosity the Methodist Minister at Rochester drove me to a place not far from a



waterfall, but it appeared to me a mere stream of water trickling down a rock, and nothing more.

To come into direct touch with the farmers, to chat with them, though they are by nature reticent, and compare them and their work with the 'cultivators' of Ceylon was doubtless a source of great joy. How hard the farmer has to work to keep his body and soul together, and support his family! He knows little rest, and works like 'the village blacksmith,' week in, week out, 'from morn till night.' On the Sunday his wife comes to church with the children, but he is often absent, for he finds it physically impossible to do anything else but to stay at home.

What is generally known as the grange is a social institution of the farmers, and somewhat like the planters' associations in certain parts of the East. At some of the meetings, different matters relating to farmers are discussed, and once in a while a 'social' is got up. There are two other organizations of less importance in certain respects. They are the Boys' Scout Troop and the Girls' Club. It is one of the most difficult things to interest the American boy in habits of quiet meditation and profitable reading. It is far easier to get him to do something in the open air. Emphasis has been laid as often as possible on the fact that a Scout is not only expected to be on the alert when physical aid is needed, but that it is his part of his duty to improve

his mind, and develop his character. There is a splendid library, and it is indeed a pleasant surprise to meet with a library consisting of books of a rare and miscellaneous type, but how few make real use of it. The girls have of late evinced a desire to widen their range of reading, and have commenced to read library books, not overlooking the world's great Christian classics.'

Another Indian student wrote during the War :

'The American people have responded with great nobility to the demands made upon them by their government in this War. But the New England Congress of Forums felt last Spring that the people were not yet awake to the seriousness of the situation. Newspapers, magazines and a limited number of speakers had striven earnestly, but the fire of the nation's spirit was only smouldering. So the Congress of Forums decided to arrange for a series of patriotic forum rallies in all principal towns and cities of New England. The objects were: 1. To impress upon the public the cause of the War. 2. To make clear the issues at stake. 3. To reiterate the program of world organization as expressed by President Wilson. 4. To warn the public against such dangers as Pro-Germanism and the failure to understand the enormous military strength of our enemy. 5. To aid in the War Stamp Drive, Red Cross, Y.M.C.A. I was invited to be one of them and I very gladly accepted. The rallies lasted

for six weeks. I addressed about twenty thousand people. It was very gratifying to see the growing interest about India amongst intelligent Americans. Sometimes questions about various subjects concerning India were asked me for an hour after the lecture. This tour was an education to me. I was able to visit a number of cities and I could see historic places such as the house of Whittier at Haverhill. I had chances to visit Amherst, Smith, Mt. Holyoke and Bowdoin Colleges. I could also study the different labour problems as I passed through the factories and shops. More than this I came in contact and could form friendships with various leaders in different cities and towns. The mayors, prominent businessmen, ministers and educated men and women usually formed the local Forum committees. Conversation with them gave me a rare opportunity to get an insight into American life, ideals, methods of work and other things. Living in "swell" American hotels was an experience not to be had in the University.'

Here is the account given by another :

'After graduating I was engaged to work in the Y.M.C.A. College, Springfield, Mass. They carried on a summer course for preparing men as "Army Secretaries" for home and abroad. I helped the librarian in the evenings. Then I was manager and cashier of the College Dining Hall. The men I worked with were kind and gentlemanly in the best

sense of the word. So I enjoyed my summer work in Springfield, Mass.'

Another student writes most interestingly:

'My third summer in this country was spent at Cromwell, Conn. I worked among flowers of various kinds—different varieties of roses, chrysanthemums, lilies of the valley, gladioli, phlox, dahlias, carnations, asters, pinks. The work was immensely interesting and instructive. I worked most of my time out in the open air—hoeing, digging, shovelling, scratching around the flower stalks, feeding them with manure, weeding out grass, tying shoots, stalks and plants to sticks, disbudding side shoots and buds, carrying flowers in wheelbarrows from one place to another. It immeasurably helped me to build up my physical health. At the beginning work seemed to be heavy, tiresome and tedious, but afterwards I gradually got used to it and enjoyed it much. I secured this kind of work not so much with a purpose of earning a great deal of money, for that was very little indeed, but with a genuine desire: (1) to have plenty of fresh air, (2) to become acquainted with the farm life of people of this country, (3) to obtain an insight into the social and religious life of the country people and (4) to visit some other parts of this country besides Philadelphia.

Cromwell is one of the old towns of New England and is situated on the west bank of the Connecticut

River, three miles above Middletown and twelve miles below Hartford. It is a nice pretty little town. It was built and inhabited by the first settlers who had escaped from the religious persecution during the reign of Charles I of England. It was named after the great Lord Protector of the short-lived English Republic. The population of the town is about 8,000 inhabitants consisting chiefly of Swedes and Italians. The climate of the town is very invigorating and wholesome. The town has risen to importance owing to the chief industry of Cromwell Gardens where a yearly average of five hundred employees are engaged in producing flowers and plants over an area of 500 acres of land and in several hundred greenhouses measuring from 30 feet to 900 feet in length and 20 to 40 feet in breadth.

Mr. A. N. Pierson, for that is the name of the florist, as a poor Swede, came to this country forty-nine years ago to seek his fortune. He began the cultivation of flowers and flowering plants and laid the foundation upon which the business which bears his name was started. In forty years he has so ably, so remarkably and so extensively developed the business that he is now one of the greatest and best florists in this country. He gets bulbs, tulips, plants and seeds from all parts of the world—Japan, China, India, Belgium and Holland. His chief speciality is the culture of high-priced roses such as the 'American Beauty.' One half of the

twenty acres of greenhouses are being devoted to growing roses for cut flowers and these cut blooms supply many of the leading stores of the eastern part of this country. The hardy plant department and the nursery are new, but trained men are employed to bring both departments to a successful perfection.

An added attraction is "Cromwell Gardens Park." It is situated in a valley above the greenhouses and is becoming "one of the interesting beauty spots of the country." A rose-garden of 4,000 plants and the largest Alpine garden in the country are important features of the tiny little park. Surrounding these, the evergreen nursery makes an attractive background, and a beautiful contrast with the small artificial lakes that have been added. Ornamental shrubs and rhododendrons add to its attractiveness. The gardens are worth visiting.

Although the town did not present to me a really typical farm life, yet I learned much of the conditions and circumstances under which a farmer lives. The simple and humble life of the people is very instructive. They grow most of the vegetables, poultry, corn and other articles of food in their own gardens and on their own farms. The people are happy, healthy and hardy. They are very courteous and warm hearted in their behaviour toward strangers.

The social life of the people, on the whole, is better than that of our own people, yet it is not altogether satisfactory. Where there are Negroes,

Swedes, Italians, Irish and other races, there you will find racial pride. A great majority of the people harbour an unjustifiable aversion and dislike for the coloured man and to put it mildly, they do not want the Orientals in this country. The "Yellow Peril" is becoming a menace to the country.'

This practice of students helping themselves is useful in several ways. It enables a good many poor students to get college education. When parents are not too poor and yet are likely to feel the strain of paying for the college education of their children, the independent efforts of the children themselves help them considerably. The dignity of labour is instilled into every young man's mind. When he himself works with his hands or knows that his intimate friends are doing such work, he cannot well despise it. Again the student comes to know the world. He leaves his home where he has been treated so kindly by his parents. He leaves the atmosphere of the College where also he has had a fine time. And he goes and works among strangers who, whether kind or not, will exact from him a great deal of work. They pay him for his work and will insist upon his satisfying them. In the course of his work he will come in contact with all sorts of people, some kind, some gruff, some cultured and some uneducated. With all these various people he must learn to move. He begins even as a student to learn his lessons from that most

exactng of teachers, the world. As he earns his own money, he realizes its importance. He is not careless with the money earned by his own hard toil. If his father meets all his bills he does not understand to the same extent all the hard work behind the money which he uses so carelessly. Again when a student works for his education he values this education itself more. He takes seriously his responsibilities as a student. Because he works hard in order to get education, he is more anxious to profit by its advantages.





